

POLITICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the history in artistic skill as it is inferior in historical value.

At first the exile was allowed no communications with his country, but in 1671 one of his sons was permitted a visit to France, and he brought with him the manuscript of the uncompleted history. The old statesman now resolved to complete the narrative and to prepare the whole of his testimony for publication. He grafted portions of his reminiscences into the earlier work, adding to it the continuation of the story down to the Restoration transplanted therefrom. To piece the two together he wrote the eighth book and parts of the ninth, with a few additions here and there. The final version was published in 1702, a generation after his death, and it should be read in the scholarly edition of Macray, which indicates when each passage was written. The continuation of the autobiography, covering the first seven years of the Restoration, was not included, for a *History of the Rebellion* had to end in 1660.

So long as Englishmen retain their interest in the constitutional struggles to which we owe most of our liberties, Clarendon will be remembered and read, dull though he often is. Yet we no longer watch the moving drama through his spectacles or indeed through those of any of his contemporaries. For a century and a quarter his testimony held its place as the supreme authority, and it received a new lease of life from the more readable narrative of the Tory Hume. Not till the middle decades of the nineteenth century was it realized, with the aid of Hal lam and Macaulay, Carlyle and Gardiner, how superficial as well as how partisan it was. Puritanism and its spokesmen were beyond the imaginative range of the Anglican lawyer, in whose nature there was something rather hard and dry. In the words of Firth, the fairest as well as the most learned of his critics, it is a

history of a
religious revolution in which the religious
element is omitted.
He despised what the eighteenth century used
to call en-
thusiasm. The Vandyck of the pen -failed
utterly when
Cromwell, a practical mystic, was in the sitter's
chair, for he
saw before him only " a brave bad man." The
heights and
depths of the soul were to htm a sealed book.
Yet tie Whig
attack was carried too far. Ranke helped to
redress the
balance, and in the pages of Mr. Felling's *IHistory*
of the Tory
Party Clarendon came into his own again. To-
day we read
him on the one side as we re^d the memoirs of
Ludlow, the
letters and speeches of Cromwell, and the
pamphlets of